

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested. Claims 9, 27, and 45 have been canceled. Claims 1, 19, 37-44, and 46-54 have been amended. Claims 1-8, 10-27, 28-44, and 46-54 are currently pending in the application.

CLAIM REJECTIONS – 35 U.S.C. § 102

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 19, 37, and 49 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Chtchetkine et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,356,915). In view of the amendments discussed below, this rejection is moot. Thus, Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

In the Office Action, the Examiner acknowledged that claims 2-18, 20-36, 38-48, and 50-54 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants thank the Examiner for this acknowledgement. Accordingly, Applicants have amended independent claim 1 to incorporate the limitations of claim 9, amended independent claim 19 to incorporate the limitations of claim 27, and amended independent claim 37 to incorporate the limitations of claim 45. As amended, all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance.

Applicants would like to note that by making these claim amendments, Applicants are in no way acquiescing or admitting that the Examiner's rejection of claims 1, 19, 37, and 49 is meritorious or proper, and in fact, no such admission is made. Rather, Applicants have decided to make these amendments for business reasons and for purposes of advancing prosecution.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that all of the pending claims are patentable over the art of record, including any art cited but not applied. Accordingly, allowance of all of the pending claims is hereby respectfully solicited.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (408) 414-1080 to discuss any issues that may advance prosecution.

No fee is believed to be due specifically in connection with this Reply. To the extent necessary, Applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any fee that may be due in connection with this Reply to our Deposit Account No. 50-1302.

Respectfully submitted,

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